

Carnoustie Early Learning and Childcare Centre

Day Care of Children

Pitskelly Park
Carnoustie
DD7 7BF

Telephone: 07919 573 852

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 August 2021

Service provided by:
Angus Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000043

Service no:
CS2020379180

About the service

Carnoustie Early Learning and Childcare Centre registered with the Care Inspectorate on 7 July 2020 and is provided by Angus Council. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 175 children from the age of 2 years and not yet attending primary school. Of those, no more than 42 are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

Carnoustie Early Learning and Childcare Centre is situated in Carnoustie, Angus and is close to local amenities including parks and the local primary school. The service uses the ground floor of an open plan purpose-built building and has direct access to the outdoors.

The aims of the service include:

- To help children by inspiring creativity, curiosity, and inquiry
- High quality interactions between staff and children
- To encourage leadership at all levels
- Parents and professionals as partners in children's learning
- To celebrate each child's achievements
- Provide a rich learning environment which adapts to the children's needs.

Two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate carried out an unannounced inspection visit of Carnoustie Early Learning and Childcare Centre on Wednesday 18 August 2021. The inspection was continued using virtual technology and feedback was given on Thursday 26 August 2021. As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 with a specific focus on quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator in Theme 1 Quality Care and Support.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children, by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting It Right for Every Child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

What people told us

We spoke with children during the visit and observed their play both indoors and outdoors. Children were observed to be happy and comfortable approaching and speaking to us. We received detailed feedback from 13 parents who use the service. Overall, parents were happy with the quality of care and support provided to children. We have included some comments below which represent parents' views:

"My child loves all the workers and runs in to nursery every day. The workers have been really excellent at noticing my child's strengths"

"Unfortunately, due to Covid I feel that the parents haven't had any say in the way the children have been introduced to the setting which my child and I really struggled with when they first started to attend the nursery - although I can't fault the staff, they seem to be doing a wonderful job"

"We have obviously been unable to go into the nursery and properly see everything but that's no fault of the nursery due to Covid. However, because of this I believe it would be beneficial to update the personal journals more frequently even if it was just pictures"

"All different members of staff I have come into contact with have been brilliant and my child has never had any issue going in always excited to see any staff member"

"Staff are amazing. Having never been in the care of others and having isolated for so long - my child was made to feel safe and comfortable immediately and has continued to love nursery"

"My child is quite quiet and reserved. The staff are amazing with them, and they are coming on so much"

"The journals are not updated enough in my opinion".

We discussed this feedback with the service and considered it as part of our inspection work. The management team shared that they would consider all feedback and work to address the matters raised by parents, whilst building on the strengths identified.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We sought information linked to their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These helped us assess the priorities for development and how the service was monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The service had created a calm and welcoming atmosphere that supported children to be active and focused. Children were observed to be comfortable, happy, and content in their play and in their interactions with staff and friends. Interactions were observed to be gentle and nurturing with staff using open ended questions to support children's thinking, creativity and problem solving. Staff had a good awareness of when to step into children's play, offer suggestions and challenge thinking. Children were given time to process and respond which supported problem solving and critical thinking skills. Positive relationships supported a child centred approach, with children being at the centre of care, learning and play.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example the service was well ventilated and enhanced cleaning was in place to provide a healthy environment for children. Staff used personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriately during personal care.

Children had access to a wide range of quality resources that supported their learning and play. A variety of open-ended and loose part resources provided opportunities to be creative and problem-solve. Play was observed to be child led and children had fun making choices and playing with a range of resources which supported their next steps in learning.

Observations of children's learning and experiences were captured in individual online journals and floor books. These allowed staff to track children's development and identify next steps in learning. We discussed ways in which these could be more visible and accessible to children to support children's involvement in their learning.

Information gathered for children supported staff to plan and tailor individual needs of the children in their care. We however found that some information was not consistently shared throughout the team. To support meet the needs of all children the service should ensure that all staff members are aware of all individual needs and planned support strategies for children.

We found that most staff had a good understanding and were aware of their role around child protection and had access to suitable training to support and safeguard children. The staff team should explore opportunities to reflect upon training to ensure all staff are confident in procedures and their role in keeping children safe.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The natural lighting, neutral and warm earthy colours of the environment enhanced a calm and welcoming feel. Resources were displayed and organised to allow children space to learn and move freely between activities. The layout supported children's choice, independence, and provided enclosed areas to focus and develop play.

The main playroom provided a flexible and rich learning environment with an extensive range of resources for children that contributed positively to children's learning. Natural and open-ended resources offered endless opportunities for children's creativity and imaginative play. Staff continuously reviewed and adapted nursery space in response to their observations, and feedback and ideas from children. For example, there was currently an 'ice cream shop' in the nursery that had been created in response to children's ideas.

Smaller, quieter sensory rooms were accessible to children which supported opportunities for focused activities and play experiences. These spaces were available to allow children to rest and sleep if needed.

Children had very good opportunities for outdoor learning, enjoying a free-flow access from the playroom. A broad range of outdoor play experiences were on offer, providing children with good opportunities to be active and healthy as they learned through play. Some outdoor areas were still being developed during our inspection. Staff discussed plans to develop the 'forest', mud kitchen and green spaces to further enhance children's positive experiences. Our inspection took place on a hot, sunny day and a very good approach to sun safety was observed. Children all had sun cream applied with a recording system in place and access to fresh drinking water was available throughout.

Accidents and incidents were recorded with details of occurrence and follow up actions and procedures taken. A weekly audit was being carried out to identify trends and support the staff team with risk assessing. We discussed expanding on the details recorded on accident and incident forms to help identify recurring issues and support inform changes required to keep children safe.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Staff relationships with children were caring and nurturing. Consideration had been given to key tasks ensuring the quality of experiences for the children had not been compromised. Staff's openness and approach supported children to feel valued and welcomed. We observed staff consistently engaging in children's play and learning and observed them to be warm and thoughtful whilst engaging with children.

We recognised that the staff team were a new team and positive steps had been taken to bring the team together as a whole to ensure outcomes for children were not impacted. Staff felt supported by management and were open with the improvement journey the service was on. Staff spoke positively of the service and look forward to further developments while showing commitment to improvements.

All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and if required were working towards an appropriate qualification for their registration. Staff showed commitment to their professional development and learning, demonstrating some knowledge to current best practice. Most staff were able to engage in whole staff in-service days training, planning meetings and termly meetings to aid their learning. We understood that due to staff working patterns not everyone could attend certain meetings. We encouraged the management to explore ways to improve this area further.

We found systems in place to carry out appraisals and 1-1 meetings. These supported staff to share feelings, ideas, and suggestions around the service's developments, and helped identify targets for their own training and learning needs. We discussed how management should continue to support staff to access training through their training calendar and embed reflections and next steps into their evidence records.

As a newly formed team we found relationships with parents to be positive, staff valued and spoke of the positive connections they had with their families. Parents commented positively on the staff team and the care and support their child received. Parents' comments included "staff are amazing", "the staff are amazing with my child - he is coming on so much" and "all the different members of staff I have come into contact with have been brilliant".

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We found the service to be managed and led to a good standard. The management team engaged well during the inspection process, taking on advice and support, demonstrating a commitment for improvement. Staff told us they felt supported by each other and that the management team supported them. Staff told us they would be comfortable in approaching management with any issues they may have. This meant children received consistent care and support that was right for them as the team worked well together. We emphasised to the management team the opportunities they had to build upon the strengths and utilise the experience and skills, in particular of seniors within the setting to further improve outcomes.

Management outlined the positive relationships they had formed with various agencies such as health visitors, speech and language and other health professionals to ensure all children are supported to reach their full potential.

We recognised the positive relationships that had been formed with children and their families. The service discussed involving parents in the continued development of the service such as the review of their aims and creating a parents' forum. We would encourage this to be taken forward to support continuous improvement and allow transparent quality assurance processes to be imbedded.

The improvement plan reflected some of the findings of the inspection. This showed a capacity to identify improvements and make plans for development. We highlighted and management recognised areas such as planning, recording of observations and floor books can be areas included within the service's improvement plan. We look forward to following up the service's progress at the next inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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